

## **FLEXIBLE FUNDS POLICY**

### **QUICK-REFERENCE GUIDE\***

**The purpose of this policy:** The Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) makes flexible funds available to children and caregivers for the purpose of closing any gaps in essential services and supports. Accordingly, the CFSA Flexible Funds Policy specifies procedures for such allocations while continuing to promote safety, permanence and well-being for children and families in the District.

#### **Criteria:**

- The requested service or support cannot be provided through any other CFSA, government or contracted channels, nor can it be provided within the timeframe needed to support the child or family.
- If the services or support are required by a kinship caregiver, the caregiver and all adults in the home must have child protection and National Crime Information Center (NCIC) clearances; the caregiver's home must also be licensed in accordance with all CFSA regulations.
- Kinship caregivers must agree that any services or support provided through flexible funds will remain with the child even if the placement changes [excepting permanent fixtures].

#### **Categories of Services and Supports:**

- Housing support which may include rental assistance for no more than three months, a one-time security deposit, utilities assistance, home repair or maintenance, lead abatement, or acquisition of necessary furniture
- Home or car adaptations [or equipment] necessary for special needs' children
- Transportation requirements
- Child care
- Job training and/or employment support
- Educational assistance
- Intensive home-based services
- Food assistance
- Clothing for children
- Activities for children, such as special lessons or summer camp

#### **Limitations on the Use of Flexible Funds:**

- Flexible funds are limited to the extent that they are appropriated by law.
- Each family in need of flexible funds must work together with the social worker and the family team to determine the extent to which they are able to contribute their own resources to the purchasing of the service or support.
- Housing support categories may only be funded once per category per fiscal year.
- Ongoing services, supports and/or activities may be supported through use of flexible funds for up to six months only.

#### **Procedures for CFSA Social Workers Requesting Use of Flexible Funds**

- As soon as a need for flexible funds is made known to a social worker, he or she shall submit the request for flexible funding of services or support to their immediate supervisor in accordance with the Flexible Funds Policy.\*
- All requests must include appropriate supporting documentation.\*
- All requests are subject to an approval process which is designed to ensure appropriate use of the funds, as well as timely access to funds through the District of Columbia's Purchase Card program.
- In an emergency situation, "gift cards" may be issued to managers who have the authority to approve flexible fund requests. Social workers must check with their supervisor to assure the correct vendor card is available.
- When requests are not of an immediate or emergency nature, supervisory social workers are authorized to approve funds up to \$1,000 per case; if requested through the FTM process, supervisory social workers are authorized to approve up to \$2,500 per case; program managers are authorized to approve up to \$5,000 per case; and, both program administrators and deputy directors are authorized to approve up to \$10,000 per case.
- Managers must ensure adequate funds are available upon approval.
- Fiscal operations shall authorize payment.

#### **Procedures for Contracted Agencies Requesting Use of Flexible Funds**

- A contracted agency program director shall submit requests for use of CFSA flexible funds following receipt of the contracted agency's social worker's request with supporting documentation.
- CFSA program monitors shall review each submission and follow the above-mentioned procedures accordingly.
- CFSA's fiscal operations shall authorize payment.

**\* See the Flexible Funds Policy for detailed contents and procedures.**

*Prepared by the Policy Unit  
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